March 30, 2011
Notes from CRRA membership meeting
Recorded by Jennifer Younger

Overview of meeting: Discussion of strategic plan, usability tests – exciting second version for enhanced functionality and searching capabilities, and membership dues

Strategic plan – opportunity to shape and communicate where we are going, by and through committees, members and the Board, and with/to our users and stakeholders

- What is important to you?
- What impacts your institution, and how?
- What strategies are needed?
- What priorities are high on your list? Circle top 3 for priorities and questions.

Janice – strategic move to hire Pat without whom we could not have made such significant progress
Pat – review of key goals and progress of last year, including enhancements for full searching of EAD records, exploration of text-mining techniques, digitization project for Catholic pamphlets, mentioned Eric’s movies online of text-mining and searching, setting up procedures for adding to existing content on portal from any given institution, updated metadata guidelines, submitting an NEH proposal to build capacity (endowment, funding for staff for finite terms)

Why does a goal occur in two places? Because relates to work of more than one group within CRRA, e.g., 1.2 is same as 2.1: takes both Collections Committee and DAC to look at ways of facilitating updating of member records and content.

Voting for top 3 priorities
1.1 – 3  
1.2 – 14 & 2 for 2.2 for total of 16  
1.3 –  
1.4 – 20 – number 1
3.1 – usability studies – will be done so no need to prioritize this one
3.2 – 5
3.3 –  
3.4 –  
3.5 – 7
3.6 – 2
3.7 – 3
4.1 – 6 4.2 - 4 - combine 4.1 and 4.2 a= for total of 10 Number 3
4.3 - 5
4.4 – 2
4.5 – 3

Comment that goals under 1 and 2 really pop out as the “what we do” while goals 3 and 4 are more in the lines of supporting the portal

Top 3 priorities: 
1 1.3 Draft a plan for increasing digital content in the portal.
Very important. Demian: Need core of digital content on the portal to bring people in, support
text mining capabilities. All hands went up responding that digitization is happening at their
institution. Text-mining is a great service on digital content. Pat gave example of finding
“weaker sex” in Catholic pamphlets. Jonathan: using community of interest to leverage growth
of digital content. VuDL has new functionality for transcription which will enable easy addition
of content. Eric: more than an index.

Focus on what? Pat: want in the end a curated collection. Eric: Easy to do things, such as
Catholic pamphlets which are flat, typed, out of copyright. Could also chose to focus on rare or
unique items of great value, but potentially more difficult to do. Pat: digitization on demand?
Demian: offered assistance from Villanova. Joe: CRRA could offer funds at some point, if/when
sufficient. Where is the center of gravity is on Catholic issues? How would we learn? These
could be exciting areas and a way to be really current? Maybe our CRRA Scholars Committee?
Professional societies in regard to social historians, others. Newspapers have come up as
important content. Theresa: outreach project for Pat & Jennifer at scholarly professional
associations. Pat: survey of Catholic colleges & universities on digital content now, interest, etc.
Alma: in focus group, invited Greek Orthodox, locally, national as well as scholars in more
obviously Catholic areas.
Pat: do some focus groups this fall with scholar user community. NEH grant will build capacity.
One option is to set up a scholarship for a scholar to work with material accessible via the portal.
Jonathan: keep in mind the “since 1922” realm of copyrighted books. Disadvantage …
Matt: Archive It has about 130 member. Matt is capturing web sites of electronic records; how
are we archiving digital materials, could CRRA get involved in that? Create MARC records for
captured web sites and put into the portal? E.g. women’s ordination conference, newsletters,
etc. that appear only online formats. Is the goal to digitize only members’ content or beyond? If
the portal, what are the characteristics of desirable content in scope? Look for material in the
Open Internet Archive. Fran: have some materials that are not-unique in print but are or would
be unique or uncommon in digital format. For those owning copyright, what kind of license
terms would they make to allow use, for some or all purposes, etc. Darren: Ensure digitizing
agency is indemnified by copyright or materials owner. Jonathan: help digitize collections at
small institutions, such as diocesan archives who are unlikely to have resources to digitize
themselves and who may never be CRRA members.

1.2 & 2.1 on facilitating continual updating of member records and content – fresh (&refresh)
content, robust, expanded volume of content – initial approach of sending records to Eric is not
sustainable. The recipe: Step 1: form a local team of collections to identify content, cataloging &
metadata to get data in, computers & systems to get stuff out, reports Step 2: identify local
collections in scope, add a flag in local records “destined for CRRA,” e.g., in local note field 590
subfield a with value of CRRA, then save as MARC file Step 3: Put file on a server someplace and
send Eric the address Step 4: Eric will harvest files and records on regular, periodic basis, and
add to portal.

What are the challenges in implementing such a recipe? Links to digital objects in 856 field. Yes,
add links in 856 field for digital objects. Yes, need to involve bibliographers. Start process at time
of purchase if possible (Alan). Is there a “cut off” for what is uncommon? Yes, define
uncommon as fewer than 10 or 12 records in WorldCat as ballpark. Notable exception (Matt,
Susan) when an item is part of a distinctive special collection. What about collection level
descriptions to tie individual records together? Another notable exception is having items in
digital format (Joe, Alan).

Recipe works for EAD records and materials too. Generate files of EAD records. Eric will harvest
those files too. Put MARC records in one file. Put EAD records in another file. Can be on same
server. Develop site map? Joe: can do now in site map. Make Google-ization possible for
greater visibility. Add to list of things to do.

Get the Catholic portal & CRRA on the radar at your local institution. Pat. What would help?
Joe, haven’t thought much about it. Campuses have offices of mission and identity which are
charged with describing. Bring those people in on communication of mission. Jennifer: give
directors some talking points to use on campus. Darren: Give doctoral students for example a
way to communicate/be part of a community of scholars and other users. Joe: echo, develop
community of scholars and support new ways of sharing scholarly communication, this
community can identify new and other kinds of important information. Think about new social
environment: build a portal that is more than a portal: a new level of usability. Incorporate
some questions into usability testing. Emphasis on scholars community came up in focus groups
too.

How can CRRA help you make this happen? Pat: Collections Committee putting in regular
update on collections to reaffirm, keep people informed. Updates are archived on blog. Can
search the blog.

What about Catholic-related collections at secular institutions? Joe asked. Jennifer: on radar
screen, question of how fast we can grow, our interest is in content and members who will
support the mission which isn’t limited to Catholic institutions.

3 4.1 & 4.2 on developing business plan and growing membership
Jennifer reported out on work of Membership Dues Task Force and discussion.
• Capacity basis is important. Important for everyone to feel they are a paying a fair share and
their fair share.
• Ask institutions who don’t feel they can pay the minimum dues to make a proposal with
specific budget numbers, etc. on what they can pay. Board reviews and works something out.
Then, we don’t have to publish a too low fee structure. Avoids being arbitrary and capricious.
• Members should be the “general library” who would also sponsor and bring in other smaller
collections in their sphere of influence, with the definition of “sphere of influence” being
defined locally. Such as University Archives if not part of the main library, a diocesan archive
located in the library or on the campus, a religious order archive, or other. Enable
local/regional/order network of collaboration: to advance the big goal. Use the university
library budget as the “total library budget” for setting dues.
• Amend recommendation to say “total university library budget (excluding professional school
libraries, such as medical and law) but including branches that are part of the university
library.
Other comments. Set up an endowment. Ask publishers for assistance.

What about an annual meeting? Yes.